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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contacts:

[Russ Curtis](#), Mobile: 415-533-1357

[JD Bergeron](#), Mobile: 415-608-3764

Update: 200+ Seabirds Rescued by International Bird Rescue at Long Beach Harbor Barge Incident

San Pedro, CA – The Southern California seabird rescue has turned into an extraordinary effort on the part of International Bird Rescue and its multi-agency partners.

Since July 7, more than 200 young Elegant Terns have come into care at Bird Rescue’s Los Angeles wildlife center. The baby birds fell from two anchored barges that host a large nesting colony in Long Beach Harbor.

The Elegant Terns are “near threatened.” This nesting colony is estimated to have up to 4,000 adults. With a restricted range and few nesting areas, they are vulnerable to disturbances by humans, dogs, cats, rats, and other natural and introduced predators.

Bird Rescue is putting out an urgent call to the public for donations to help feed and house these young seabirds. Donate here: www.birdrescue.org/help-terns

If you find an injured or orphaned bird, you can help by calling its Southern California Bird HelpLine at (310) 514-2573.

If the public is interested in volunteering in the future for Bird Rescue, they can submit an application here: www.birdrescue.org/volunteer. We are also



asking the public to not approach these barges as increased disturbance may make the problem worse.

Several things are happening simultaneously during this important wildlife response.

Bird Rescue has deployed staff on site in Long Beach to assist with safe search and collection, retrieving struggling chicks from the water and transporting them to the clinic. Thanks to volunteers on the water, like Lenny Arkinstall of Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards, who has been providing a boat to patrol the surrounding waters and has been assisting in saving these helpless baby birds that will drown without rescue.

At the clinic, located in San Pedro, the influx of young birds have been evaluated, dried, and warmed to stabilize their condition. Once warm and dry, we are finding that the birds are doing well. They require hand feeding, which is a time consuming and expensive effort with a high patient volume.

Our clinic staff members are always attentive to the individualized needs of particular species, and work to ensure that the birds receive proper care. For example, knowing that Elegant Terns have sensitive feet and need a softer natural substrate to prevent foot injuries, staffers collected sand to line the bottom of the birds' enclosures.

Some tern species exhibit "creche" behavior – that is they engage in collective parenting and will adopt, feed, and care for young - even if they are not their own. Young terns learn to forage and feed from adults, which means that returning them to the colony could be the best option for the birds.

As always Bird Rescue collaborates with partners for the good of wild waterbirds. At present, we have our experts in the field who, working closely with our partner agencies such as biologists from California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), are determining practical and immediate solutions to prevent the problem from continuing.

Bird Rescue has worked with organizations such as the Port of Los Angeles to anticipate and prevent human wildlife conflict. It will always respond to rescue waterbirds in crisis, but to protect vulnerable species from population decline, we prefer to plan with partners to innovate ways to prevent this type of event from happening in the future.

If you find a bird in distress, please follow these TEMPORARY care instructions to keep the bird safe before transporting:

- Find a medium/large-sized box and place a folded towel at the bottom.
- Ensure there are holes in the box big enough for airflow.
- Place the bird in the box and keep in a dark, quiet place.
- Keep the bird warm.
- Please don't feed the bird.
- Leave the bird alone; don't handle or bother it.
- Always keep children and pets away.
- Call our Los Angeles wildlife center: 310-514-2573

Media Resources

Photos and videos from the event: <https://bird-rescue.app.box.com/s/lqemjaro6naknoysba5pkmpz7lwcerbq>

Watch: One minute Tern Rescue YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/spWtl-iCogA>



About International Bird Rescue

Over the last fifty years Bird Rescue has rescued over 125,000 wild birds, responded to over 225 oil spill events including saving wildlife at the 1989 Exxon Valdez Oil Spill, helping manage the rehabilitation of 20,000 oiled penguins in South Africa, and rescuing oiled wildlife in the Gulf of Mexico during the 2010 Deepwater Horizon well blowout.

For more information about International Bird Rescue, please visit: www.BirdRescue.org

International Bird Rescue, 3601 South Gaffey Street, San Pedro, CA 90731

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